them forth. They, therefore, having been sent out by the holy spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." (Acts 13:2-4, *Diag.*) This is proof of the leading or guiding of the holy spirit.

5 There is nothing in the record that would indicate that Elimelech or Naomi was doing or did anything displeasing to God; therefore they must have gone into Moab according to the will of the King Eternal, even as the name Elimelech signifies, "My God is King." Criticism of Elimelech's course would therefore be out of order. God's people found themselves in the midst of Satan's organization and oppressed by military power from the year 1914 to 1918, and surely they were not in that condition because of any displeasure on the part of God towards them, even though some thought so. The spirit of Jehovah God led them into that condition that his purposes might be accomplished. By his spirit, the holy spirit, Jehovah God guides or leads his people up to a certain point of time, and thus he did until the time when "the comforter" was taken away, which would necessarily occur when Jesus, the Head of his organization, came to the temple and gathered unto himself those whom he found faithful when he, as the great Judge, began his judgment, in 1918.

6 The proper name "Naomi" is found only in the book of Ruth. It means "pleasant", that is to say, pleasing to Jehovah, as it is written: "A wise son maketh a glad father." (Prov. 10:1) "My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me." (Prov. 27:11) 'God sets the members in the body of Christ according to his pleasure.' (1 Cor. 12:18) "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Ps. 16:5, 6) Those who are devoted to God please him when dwelling together in peace. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. 133:1) "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words." (Prov. 15:26) "For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." (Prov. 3:12, 13, 17) "Be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Col. 1:9, 10) "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3:22) These scriptures, in harmony with the name of Naomi, strongly indicate that her course was pleasing to Jehovah God.

7 When God's consecrated and spirit-begotten ones found themselves in the trying conditions by reason of the World War there were then some who remained faithful to the Lord and to his kingdom while enduring many tribulations and persecutions, and these are they whom the Lord upon coming to his temple found faithful and approved, and to whom he said: 'You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.' It was then that the Lord Jesus committed to this class all his goods or kingdom interests and designated such the "faithful and wise servant", and which class is known and designated as the "remnant" or forming a part thereof. Naomi therefore seems clearly to represent those who went through the tribulation of 1917 to 1919 and remained faithful and true to God and his kingdom, and who constituted the original remnant or "faithful servant" class, and who immediately took up the work foreshadowed by the Prophet Elisha. Therefore here appears a close relationship of the books of Esther and Ruth. Naomi and Mordecai pictured the same class of the "faithful servant" found when the Lord appeared at his temple. These faithful ones received the garments of salvation, are identified as members of God's organization, and, being covered with the robe of righteousness, receive the mark of Jehovah's approval and were thus counted in as a part of God's elect servant in whom he has pleasure or in whom he delights. (Isa. 42:1) Jehovah takes delight in his beloved Son and in those who are faithful members of his body. "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!"—Song of Solomon 7:6.

8 There is nothing in the record that would warrant any harsh criticism of Elimelech or Naomi. On the contrary, Elimelech was a good man in the land of bread and peace and was one giving praise to Jehovah's name. Naomi, like God's faithful people during the World War days, was placed in a condition of great sorrow, during which she maintained her integrity toward God. The "faithful servant" class, whom she foreshadowed, now says: "He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me." —Ps. 18:17-19.

9 One of the sons of Naomi bore the name Mahlon, which means "sickly"; being derived from the primitive root meaning "to be rubbed or worn; (hence) to be weak, sick, afflicted; or (causative) to grieve or make sick". The other son was named Chilion, and which name means "pining, destruction", being derived from the primitive root meaning "to end, to cease, to be finished, perish, to complete, to consume". The two boys, being offspring of Naomi, seem to picture the fruitage of the consecrated, whom Naomi pictured, and which fruitage this class brought forth during the time of the Elijah work of the church and therefore during the time of the advocacy of the holy spirit as a comforter or helper of the church. That

was not kingdom fruitage, because neither of these boys lived to return to Bethlehem-Judah or to become possible ancestors of the future king of Israel and of the King who was afterwards born "in the city of David". (Luke 2:11) Neither did either of these sons 'raise up seed to the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off'.

[10] Looking now at the facts it is readily observed that during the Elijah period of the church the fruitage of the consecrated was largely of the "character development" kind, those attempting to bear it expecting by bringing forth such fruitage to make sure of entering into the kingdom and assisting the Lord in ruling the universe. It was like the names of these two sons, or which is suggested by their names, namely, a sickly, weak, self-centered, self-flattering kind, as well as a pining growth, "having men's persons in admiration." During that period of time, and prior to 1918, the Naomi class without a doubt in all good conscience brought into their communion a class of people who grew spiritually sick and pined because they desired quick passage out of the earth and its troubles and to be carried away on flowery beds of ease to a lazy, easy resting place. It was a fruitage that had a sickly look, always looking for sympathy. If those who thus were brought into communion with the Naomi class were not held in high esteem, given much attention at conventions or meetings of other kinds, and admired and made much over, they pined and wasted away, inducing themselves to believe that they were a sacrifice beneficial to the Lord and that they thus must do in order to be the chief ones in heaven. They "died" young, not, however, because they were good.

[11] The Naomi class, faithful and true to the Lord, labored hard to accomplish what was thought to be "harvest work" and to find and gather wheat into the garner of the Lord, but, like Naomi's two sons, that fruitage amounted to nothing. Frequently a good zealous man or woman would participate in the witness work and return at the end of the day and say, "I have found a wheat head; I have been doing harvest work," and would bring into communion with the class some such who later expected to receive adulation and pity, and, not receiving this, pined away. Paul expressed the matter in these words: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." (Gal. 4:19) And again he said: "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." (1 Cor. 4:14, 15) Those faithful ones whom Naomi pictured did the best they knew, it seems, and the Lord loved them for their faithfulness even though they did not bring forth the fruit of the kingdom and to the glory of God. The faithful and unselfish devotion to the Lord during that period and up to the time of the Lord's coming to his temple was pleasing to God and to Christ, and the great Judge received and approved them after he appeared at his temple.

[12] Naomi and her sons were Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah. Ephratah was another and earlier name given to the town of Bethlehem. (Gen. 35:19) The name of the place means "fruitfulness", but for some time that became a place of famine, a place of scarcity of food for Naomi and her sons. "The house of bread" wherein the praise of Jehovah was sung became bare and a place of sorrow by reason of the famine, which evidently God had called upon the land. So it was with the Naomi class; in the period of time from 1917 to 1918 there was a scarcity of meat because of the doubt and misgivings concerning the will of God which these had. (John 4:34) The Lord's consecrated people were then in perplexity about what should be done to carry forward the Lord's work. It was indeed a condition well represented by famine, and the consecrated were sad.

[13] Naomi and her sons "came into the country of Moab, and continued there". Moab represented Satan's organization. The Naomi class and the spiritual "children" of such came in touch with the Devil's organization during the World War and their way was a hard one. Concerning this Naomi said: "The hand of the Lord is gone out against me. . . . The Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." This does not indicate unfaithfulness on the part of Naomi or that she was afflicted because of wrongdoing. When the Lord's people came into a hard and famine condition during the World War, that was a trying period for them; it could hardly be said that this condition came upon them by reason of their unfaithfulness. There was a cessation of the work in the name of the Lord, and for this reason it appears that the consecrated believed that the Lord was angry with them; and when they learned that his anger was turned away they rejoiced and became more active, even as God through the prophet Isaiah indicates.—Isa. 12:1.

[14] The part that Naomi played in the prophetic drama was without a doubt according to the will of God, and she was therefore blameless. On the contrary, she was pleasing to the Lord. Likewise the testing time that came upon the Naomi class in 1917 and 1918 was not because of faithlessness, but it came in harmony with the will of God, that his purposes might be accomplished; and those who remained faithful and true to him during these trying times maintained their integrity toward God and were pleasing to him. There is no evidence whatsoever that Naomi at any time became unfaithful to Jehovah God, nor is there any evidence that the Naomi class while undergoing that trying experience of the World War time were unfaithful to God. It was because of their faithfulness during that period that the Lord approved them when he appeared at the temple for judgment. Had these been unfaithful the Lord would not have approved

them, nor would he have told them that they had been faithful over a few things and for that reason he would increase their privileges and give them many more opportunities of serving Jehovah God and proving their love to him.

HELPER REMOVED

15 Jehovah is the husband of his organization. (Isa. 54:5) Christ Jesus is the Head of the church. The man or husband is the head of his wife, and therefore her helper, guide and comforter. (Deut. 24:5) "For a husband is the wife's head, even as the Anointed One is Head of the congregation; he is a Preserver of the body. But even as the congregation is subjected to the Anointed One, so also the wives to their husbands in everything." (Eph. 5:23, 24, *Diag.*) When Jesus was with his disciples he was their helper, guide and comforter. When he was about to be taken away he said to them: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."—John 14:16-18.

16 The holy spirit was given to the church at Pentecost to perform the office of comforter, advocate and helper of and for the spirit-begotten ones during the absence of Christ Jesus. "But when he may come, the spirit of truth, he will lead you into all the truth; for he will not speak from himself; he will speak whatever he may hear; and declare to you the coming things. He will glorify me; because he will take of mine, and declare to you. All things that the Father has are mine; on account of this I said, That out of mine he takes, and will declare to you."—John 16:13-15, *Diag.*

17 These texts show that the holy spirit would and did perform the office of helper, advocate and comforter of those who responded to the call to the kingdom, and until the coming of Christ Jesus and the gathering unto himself of his own. Furthermore it is written that when Christ Jesus appears at the temple for judgment he is attended by his holy angels. (Matt. 25:31) When Christ Jesus gathers his faithful unto himself he uses his angels for this very purpose, as he stated: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 24:31) Christ also uses his holy angels to gather out those who have responded to the call to the kingdom but who have not been faithful. (Matt. 13:41) If the holy spirit were still operating or performing the office of advocate and helper there would be no necessity for Christ's employing his holy angels in the work mentioned in the foregoing text. Furthermore, since Christ Jesus is the Head or Husband to his church when he appears at the temple of Jehovah for judgment, and gathers his own to himself, there would be no necessity for a substitute for Christ Jesus, such as the holy spirit; therefore the office of the holy spirit as an advocate, comforter and helper would cease. The angels of Christ Jesus forming his retinue of servants at the temple, invisible indeed to man, are given charge over members of the temple company yet on the earth. "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."—Ps. 91:11.

18 The third verse of the first chapter of Ruth reads: "And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons." Elimelech, the helper and comforter of Naomi, died and was therefore taken away or removed. In the prophetic drama this pictures the cessation or ending of Jehovah's relationship towards his people on earth by means of the office of the holy spirit as advocate, helper and comforter. The Lord Jesus came to his temple in 1918, and that would mark the time of the cessation of the work of the holy spirit as an advocate, helper and comforter of the members of the church on earth. There the holy spirit was taken away, which was foreshadowed by the death of Elimelech. When Elimelech died, leaving Naomi and her sons, it was a time of sorrow for them, and this sorrow continued upon Naomi until Ruth is brought into the family of Boaz. Likewise when the Lord came to his temple, in 1918, and the holy spirit as advocate, helper and comforter was removed, there was sorrow upon the church, and it continued until the faithful learned that Christ Jesus was at his temple and that the time of rejoicing had come, and then they began to rejoice. They then learned that there was much work for the faithful yet to do, and with joy they went forth to do it. When her husband was taken away doubtless Naomi said, "The Lord hath forgotten me"; and that well corresponds with what the words of the prophet of God say: "Zion [represented by the members of the Naomi class on earth] said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." (Isa. 49:14-16) But the Lord had not forsaken Zion; neither had the Lord forsaken or forgotten Naomi, nor the Naomi class.

RUTH

19 At this point Ruth enters upon the stage of the prophetic drama and plays an important part. She was devoted to Naomi, and Naomi loved Ruth very dearly. The two sons of Naomi married, one of them to a Moabitish woman named Orpah, and the other to Ruth. "And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth; and they dwelled there about ten years." (1:4) These two sons here also seem to picture a class that is not faithful and obedient to God. The law of Jehovah governing the marital relationship of the Israelites with those of other nations, and by which law the sons were bound, reads: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away

thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." (Deut. 7:3, 4) "Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice: and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods."—Ex. 34:15, 16.

[20] Naomi, however, would not be responsible for the acts of her sons who were of marriageable age, nor could fault be found with her because her sons had taken wives outside of Israel. Surely no blame could be put upon the young women whom these boys married, but the young women would be responsible for the part or course of action taken by them after they became the wives of the two young men of Israel. Naomi had now acquired by the law of marriage two daughters, and hence they are called her daughters-in-law. These two daughters-in-law and the two sons at this point collectively picture a class that became associated with the Naomi class shortly before the coming of the Lord to the temple for judgment. From the time that Ruth elected to stay with Naomi she particularly pictured those chosen after 1918.

[21] Chilion, one of the sons of Naomi, married Orpah. "The name of the one was Orpah." Her name means "mane", and is the feminine of the word meaning "nape" or "back of the neck". This name suggests a "stiff-necked or stubborn, slothful" class who were brought in contact with the truth. "It is a stiff-necked [or, stiff-of-the-neck] people." (Ex. 32:9) "They have turned unto me the back [*margin*, the neck], and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction." (Jer. 32:33) Those who disregard God's Word are rebellious and are properly called "stiff of neck" and they turn the back of the neck to the Lord. "For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death?" (Deut. 31:27) "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. 29:1) Upon the authorities here cited it may well be said that Orpah played the part picturing the class that came in contact with the truth, and was associated with the Naomi class after the taking away of the holy spirit in the capacity of comforter or helper, and that afterwards turned their faces away and turned their back to the Lord.

[22] The other young Moabitish woman became the wife of Mahlon, as it is written: "And the name of the other [was] Ruth." At this point of the drama there appears a beautiful woman, a stranger to the nation of Israel, and who became famous among that people, and who was greatly honored by Jehovah God. The name Ruth means "friend" or "female associate". She must have been a lovable creature and one with a pure heart. Her devotion to her female associate Naomi, her mother-in-law, shows her as a true friend. "A friend loveth at all times." (Prov. 17:17; 22:11, *Leeser;* 27:9, *Leeser*) Not only did Ruth become the associate of her mother-in-law, Naomi, but she was a true and faithful friend, and this is proven by the fact that she loved Naomi all the time and that Naomi loved Ruth. They were unselfishly undertaking to serve each other, which is proof that they loved each other at all times. Naomi remained faithful and true to Jehovah, the God of Israel, and was without doubt a witness unto Ruth regarding Jehovah as the only true God. The testimony of Naomi concerning Jehovah had the proper effect upon Ruth and led her to devote herself to Jehovah and to go on with his covenant people, forsaking everything behind.

[23] Similarly the Naomi class remained true and faithful unto God during the time of stress, and their testimony to others concerning God and his kingdom has had to do with others' seeing and serving Jehovah and his righteous cause since 1919. Thus Ruth particularly pictures a class coming to a knowledge of God and serving him from and after the coming of the Lord to his temple.

OFFENDERS

[24] The judgment of the Lord at the temple began with those in covenant with God and who therefore had agreed to do the will of God. "Judgment must begin at the house of God." (1 Pet. 4:17) It is to be expected that the judgment would be adverse to some who were in line for a place in that house, and the physical facts fully support that expectation. About 1918 and thereafter there were those amongst the company of God's people on earth who because of their selfishness refused to work according to God's appointed way and therefore became the workers of iniquity or lawless ones; furthermore they set traps and snares to draw others away with them and to catch them, and thereby they became offenders, within the meaning of the words of Jesus, and were for that reason gathered out. (Matt. 13:41) "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."—Matt. 7:23.

[25] The two sons of Naomi pictured the offenders and workers of iniquity. They pictured those that pined, were spiritually sick and wasted away and died. "And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband." (1:5) Both of these boys failed to uphold or perpetuate the name of their father Elimelech, whose name means "God is King". By reason of their death they failed to "raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance".—4:10.

[26] These two sons represent a class that were unfaithful to the Lord, became rebellious, failed and refused to bear the fruits of the kingdom and were cut off when the Lord came to his temple. It must have